

DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

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September 7, 2006

TO: COUNTY AGRICULTURAL COMMISSIONERS
ACCREDITED CERTIFICATION AGENTS
ORGANIC REGISTRANTS

The California Department of Food and Agriculture will be ending the current Cost Share Program, due to a lack of applications being received. Applications from operations dated between October 1, 2004 and September 30, 2005 will no longer be accepted or reimbursed after September 30, 2006. Funds remaining will be eligible for reimbursement to operations certified organic between October 1, 2005 and September 30, 2006 and are now eligible for reimbursement. Amount of funds currently available are \$141,367.03. No applications will be accepted or reimbursed for this new time frame after December 31, 2006.

Applications will be processed on a first come, first serve basis. Any incomplete application will be returned, and you will lose your place in line. Therefore, it is very important all information is included, and that the application is filled out accurately and signed. No applications will be accepted after December 31, 2006. All remaining funds not reimbursed will be returned to United States Department of Agriculture.

Copies of this letter and the application forms are being provided to all the County Agricultural Commissioners Offices, all the Accredited Certification Agents that operate in California, and is available to be downloaded at the CDFA website at url:

<http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/is/fveqc/organic.htm>

If you have further questions please contact me at the phone number listed above, extension 3462

Sincerely,

David Carlson, Supervisor
Organic Program
Inspection and Compliance Branch
Division of Inspection Services

DC/dc

Enclosure

cc: Ray Green
cc: Bob Pooler

Federal Organic Certification Cost Share Application

To be eligible for reimbursement the certification(s) must have been completed between October 1, 2005, and September 30, 2006.

The USDA cost share program is available on a first come, first serve basis. If your application for cost share does not contain all of the appropriate information, it will be returned to you and you will lose your position for approval. The amount of reimbursement is 75% of certification costs (maximum of \$500). Submit your application to the address listed above.

You must include:

- ☐ Attach a copy of your certification that was issued after October 1, 2005.
 (If there is not a date on the certificate, you must have some type of document from the certifier that indicates what the date was of the renewal.)
- ☐ Attach copies of invoices from your certifier for the expenses incurred by your operation for obtaining that certification.
 (Examples include: Inspection cost, annual fees, renewal fees, application fees, assessments, etc. **Registration fees paid to the State are not reimbursable**).
- ☐ Completely fill out the cost share application. (Section A)
- ☐ Sign and date the application. (Section B)

SECTION A	PRODUCER/HANDLER IDENTIFICATION			
	1. First Name and/or Company Name	M.I.	Last Name	
	2. Address			
	3. City	4. County	5. State	6. Zip Code
	7. CA Organic Registration Number	Attach a copy of your certificate and an itemized invoice for certification costs.		
	8. Phone Number	9. Fax Number	10. Email Address	
	11. Federal Tax Identification Number or Social Security Number (required)			

SECTION B	CERTIFICATION BY PRODUCER	
	I certify that the above information is true and correct, and the organic certification identified above for which cost-share reimbursement is requested was issued after October 1, 2005.	
	Notice of Penalties: Penalty for knowingly making false statements or false entries, or attempts to secure money through fraudulent means, may include fines and/or incarceration and/or forfeiture of agriculture assistance funds under applicable Federal and State law.	
	_____ Certified Operations Signature	Date ____/____/____ month day year

SECTION C	(OFFICIAL USE ONLY) IDENTIFICATION OF ELIGIBLE CERTIFICATION COSTS			
	Associated expenses:	Date incurred	Amount Paid by operation *	Reimbursed amount

Frequently asked questions:

How much money has been allocated? Approximately \$141,367.03 is remaining to be distributed.

When do I submit my application? Applications will be received from Sept 1, 2006 until December 31, 2006.

How will I know if my application has been approved? If you have indicated an email address you will be notified of your approval via email, if you do not have email you will be notified via the US postal service.

What documents do I submit with the cost share application? Submit copies of certificate, or a letter from certifier showing evidence of certification. Also submit invoices, or other documents that show evidence of the cost incurred for obtaining certification.

Do the State registration fees paid for registration count for reimbursement? No, the fees paid to the state are not included in the cost share program.

Can I submit the fees paid for soil or water analysis for cost share reimbursement? No, those fees are not required to obtain and maintain certification.

What fees are eligible for reimbursement? The annual application fee, charges for percentages of sales of organic product, annual inspection fees, and/or quarterly assessments and other fees that if not paid would result in suspension of certification.

Why would my application be denied or returned? Your application will be returned if you fail to sign it, fail to provide a tax identification number or social security number, fail to submit copies of invoices or other documents from your certifier, fail to submit copies of the certificate, fail to complete the form appropriately. It will also be returned if all the funds have been expended.

How will it be determined which application is approved. Applications will be approved on a first come, first served basis. Applications returned to the operation will lose their position in the approval line.

Will the cost share program continue? At this time no. The USDA has expended the entire 5 million and unless Congress provides additional funding it will not continue.

Can I submit applications for both time frames? Yes, as long as you provide documents from your certifier showing evidence of certification costs incurred during the two time frames.

When will the current cost share program end. Applications will not be accepted after Sept. 30, 2006.

When will the next cost share program end. Applications will not be accepted after Dec. 31, 2006